

REMARKS

Claim 7 pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 7 is amended.

Support for the amendment to claim 7 can be found, for example, on page 8, lines 8-13. No new matter is added.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0102843 (Yagi) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,969,468 (Byers). The rejection of claim 7 is respectfully traversed.

Yagi, for example, does not disclose an external device adapted to be disposed outside a body of a patient. Furthermore, Yagi does not disclose an image pickup device including a plurality of electrodes each of which outputs the electrical stimulation pulse signal, has a needle shape end and is adapted to be implanted in the eye so as to stick in a bunch of nerve fibers of an optic papilla of the eye. Yagi teaches away from the features claimed in claim 7 by disclosing an intracorporeal unit 3, which includes a front unit 15 which is implanted in the interior part of the eyeball, and an electrode unit 19 composed of a plurality of electrodes 11 that transmits an electric signal to the retina. *See* paragraph [0059] of Yagi. Therefore, Yagi discloses a device that requires interaction with the retina.

The Office Action acknowledges that Yogi fails to disclose a plurality of electrodes each of which outputs the electrical stimulation pulse signal, has a needle-shaped end and is adapted to be implanted in the eye so as to stick in a bundle of nerve fibers of an optic papilla of the eye, each electrode having a predetermined length for placing its end in an optic nerve of the eye when the electrode is stuck in the optic papilla, as recited in claim 7.

The Office Action relies on Byers as allegedly remedying the absences in Yagi. However, Byers does not disclose an electrode covered with an insulating material with high biocompatibility and having first regions bundles up and second regions individually foldable

between the first regions and the electrode, as recited by amended claim 7. Byers merely discloses a larger portion of the needle may be exposed in stimulating situations... [i]n order to enhance the likelihood of successfully sensing or stimulating a particular nerve fiber with a particular type of nerve. Therefore, Byers does not disclose an electrode composed of material with high biocompatibility and having first regions bundled up and second regions individually foldable between the first regions and the electrode. Therefore, Byers does not disclose a system which allows electrodes to be stuck in the optic papilla and that is adapted to be implanted in the eye so as to stick in a bundle of nerve fibers, as recited in claim 7.

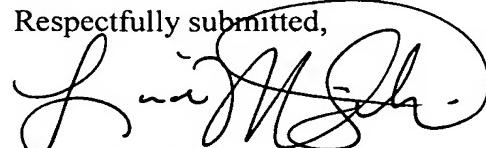
Furthermore, the disclosure of Byers was not intended to be used in an eyeball. Thus, there would be no reasonable rationale for modifying Yagi based on Byers.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter recited in independent claim 7 is patentable over the applied references. Consequently, it is respectfully requested for the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 7.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Linda M. Saltiel
Registration No. 51,122

JAO:LMS/ccs

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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